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SUBJECT: LEBANON: POPE ISSUES ANOTHER CALL FOR CEASEFIRE

REF: (a) Sandrolini-Larrea email August 8, (b) vatican 161, (c) vatican 158

¶1. Pope Benedict XVI issued another call for peace and ceasefire in the Middle East, during his weekly public audience in Castelgandolfo August 9. Text and informal translation follow in para 2.

¶2. Begin Italian text:

Cari fratelli e sorelle, il mio accorato pensiero va ancora una volta all'amata regione del Medio Oriente. In riferimento al tragico conflitto in corso ripropongo le parole di Papa Paolo VI all'ONU, nell'ottobre del 1965. Disse in quella occasione: "Non piy gli uni contro gli altri, non piy, giammai! ... Se volete essere fratelli, lasciate cadere le armi dalle vostre mani". Di fronte agli sforzi in atto per giungere finalmente al cessate-il-fuoco e ad una soluzione giusta e duratura del conflitto ripeto, con l'immediato mio Predecessore, il grande Papa Giovanni Paolo II, che h possibile cambiare il corso degli avvenimenti quando prevalgono la ragione, la buona volont` , la fiducia nell'altro, l'attuazione degli impegni assunti e la cooperazione fra partners responsabili (cfr Discorso al Corpo Diplomatico, 13 gennaio 2003). Cosl ha detto Giovanni Paolo II e quanto detto vale anche per oggi, per tutti. A tutti rinnovo l'esortazione ad intensificare la preghiera per ottenere il desiderato dono della pace.

Begin post informal translation:

Dear brothers and sisters, my sorrowful thoughts go once again to the beloved region of the Middle East. In reference to the tragic conflict currently taking place I repeat the words of Pope Paul VI when he addressed the United Nations in October 1965. On that occasion he said, "No more one against the other, no more, never again!...If you want to be brothers, let the weapons fall from your hands." In regard to the efforts under way to finally achieve a ceasefire and a just and lasting solution to the conflict, I repeat, with my immediate predecessor the great Pope John Paul II, that it is possible to change the course of events when reason, good will, mutual trust, fulfillment of obligations undertaken and cooperation between responsible partners prevail (c.f. Message to the Diplomatic Corps, 13 January 2003). What John Paul II said is also valid for today, for everyone. To all people I renew the call to intensify prayers to obtain the desired gift of peace.

¶3. Comment: the pope has consistently mentioned his concern for Lebanon and the Middle East, including calls for ceasefire, for the past several weeks -- see reftels.

SANDROLINI